

IPAWS PILOT TRAINING COURSE RELEASED

An independent, Web-based study course, “Effective Alert and Warning Messaging,” is currently under development at FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute (EMI). This self-paced course is expected to take approximately two hours to complete and will include a final test covering the following topics:

- Introduction to IPAWS
- Appropriate, Effective and Accessible Alert and Warning Messages
- Common Alerting Protocol Message Composition

Volunteers are currently providing feedback on the pilot version. The final course is expected to be released to IPAWS participants in December, 2011.

The overall goal of the training is to ensure that warnings and alerts issued via the Emergency Alert System, Commercial Mobile Alert System, and National Weather Service dissemination services are necessary, timely, accurate, and based on guidance from decades of social science research.

Local government officials applying for IPAWS accounts on behalf of their organizations will be required to demonstrate successful completion of the course. They must also ensure that any other members of their organization who have system access to issue public alerts complete the training.

The course was designed based on input from a focus group consisting of representatives from the broadcasting, public safety, and emergency management communities, as well as the Federal Communications Commission and National Weather Service.

IPAWS-OPEN LAUNCHES EAS MESSAGING CAPABILITY

In late September, version 3.0 of the IPAWS-Open Platform for Emergency Networks (OPEN) was released to production, enabling alerting authorities to transmit Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) formatted alerts to the nation’s Emergency Alert System (EAS). This event represents a major milestone in progress towards the “Next Generation EAS”.

Public and private software developers have been working with the IPAWS engineering team to update and test their software products in order to incorporate the EAS messaging capabilities into their alert authoring tools. These tools are used by public officials to issue warnings to the public.

The IPAWS program office also released the EAS Atom Feed address needed to poll for alerts. Manufacturers are currently in the process of providing updates to encoding and decoding equipment so that radio and television broadcasters can poll for EAS alerts that are sent via IPAWS-OPEN.

The current FCC ruling requires EAS participants to be able to receive CAP-formatted EAS alerts no later than June 30, 2012. However, some broadcasters may be ready ahead of that deadline.

Contact FEMA

For more information about IPAWS, visit the website at

<http://www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/>
or send an email to ipaws@dhs.gov.

Media:

FEMA News Desk (available 24/7)

E-mail: FEMA-News-Desk@dhs.gov

Telephone: (202) 646-3272



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CMAS ROLL-OUT TO BEGIN BY END OF 2011

The Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS) provides the capability for authorized government agencies to send emergency alerts to citizen's cell phones that are located in areas affected by an imminent threat. CMAS alerts can only be sent using the IPAWS-OPEN system.

The FCC requires that participating wireless carriers must begin deployment by April 2012. However, some carriers plan to offer the services ahead of schedule – by the end of the year - in some major metropolitan areas like New York City and the District of Columbia.

Only alerting authorities that have signed up for IPAWS and taken the online course will be able to use CMAS.

SIGN UP FOR IPAWS

To send alerts through IPAWS, public safety organizations should complete an application to establish a Memorandum of Agreement with FEMA, and have an IPAWS compatible software system in place. For information, visit: http://www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/alerting_authorities.shtm

Meet the FEMA Team

You can learn more about IPAWS at these upcoming conferences:

IAEM – Nov. 12-17, 2011, Las Vegas
SCTE Cable Tech Expo – Nov. 15-17, 2011, Atlanta

PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSION

Do you have questions about the IPAWS Program? You are invited to participate in IPAWS Special Interest Group (SIG) Webinars to learn about the latest progress, what the IPAWS alerts and warnings program can do for you, and take advantage of opportunities to interact with subject matter experts and FEMA IPAWS personnel. The team hosts webinars for both IPAWS practitioners and developers.

When: First and Third Wednesday of each Month – 12 pm ET

Sign-up for Notification: Sign-up for our mail groups in FEMA's email service using the following link and select either the IPAWS Stakeholder or IPAWS System Developers mailing lists under the Information Technology heading.

https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDH_SFEMA/subscriber/new?topic_id=USDHSFEMA_165

Archives of past webinars can be found on the IPAWS website.

IPAWS IN THE NEWS

Read more about the program. IPAWS was recently featured in stories in [911 Magazine](#), [Emergency Management Magazine](#) and [Communication and Sound Magazine](#).



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